

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

MARVEL
LIMITED SERIES
2 of 5
PARENTAL ADVISORY

FURTH
DAVID
LARK
GAUDIANO
ISANOVE

THE DARK TOWER ~THE GUNSLINGER~



THE BATTLE OF TULL

STEPHEN KING THE DARK TOWER

CREATIVE DIRECTOR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
STEPHEN KING

PLOT AND CONSULTATION
ROBIN FURTH

SCRIPT
PETER DAVID

PENCILS
MICHAEL LARK

INKS
STEFANO
GAUDIANO

COLOR ART
RICHARD
ISANOVE

LETTERING
VC'S JOE
SABINO

COVER
MICHAEL LARK
RICHARD ISANOVE

VICE PRESIDENT OF CREATIVE
TOM MARVELLI

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES & PUBLISHING
DAVID GABRIEL

PRODUCTION
MAYELA GUTIERREZ

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT
RUWAN JAYATILLEKE

ASSISTANT EDITORS
SANA AMANAT
CHARLIE BECKERMAN

CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER
JOE QUESADA

SENIOR EDITOR
RALPH MACCHIO

PUBLISHER
DAN BUCKLEY

EDITOR IN CHIEF
AXEL ALONSO

SPECIAL THANKS TO CHUCK VERRILL, MARSHA DEFILIPPO, BARBARA ANN MCINTYRE, BRIAN STARK,
JIM NAUSEDAS, JIM MCCANN, ARUNE SINGH, JEFF SUTER, JOHN BARBER, LAUREN SANKOVITCH, MIKE HORWITZ AND
CHRIS ELIPOULOS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON DARK TOWER COMICS, VISIT MARVEL.COM/DARKTOWER.
TO FIND MARVEL COMICS AT A LOCAL COMIC AND HOBBY SHOP, GO TO WWW.COMICSLOCATOR.COM OR CALL 1-888-COMICBOOK.

DARK TOWER: THE GUNSLINGER - THE BATTLE OF TULL NO. 2, September 2011. Published Monthly by MARVEL WORLDWIDE, INC., a subsidiary of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT, L.L.C. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 135 West 50th Street, New York, NY 10020. © 2011 Stephen King. All rights reserved. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of Stephen King. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, or/for institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Marvel and its logos are TM & © Marvel Characters, Inc. \$3.99 per copy in the U.S. (GST #R127022822) in the direct market. Canadian Agreement #06060512. Printed in the USA. ALAN FINE, EVP - Office of the President, Marvel Worldwide, Inc. and EVP & GM Marvel Characters & U.S. DAN BUCKLEY, Publisher & President - Print, Animation & Digital Division; JOE QUESADA, Chief Creative Officer; JIM GARCILLO, Chief Operating Officer; DAVID BOGART, SVP of Business Affairs & Talent Management; TOM BREVOORT, SVP of Publishing; C.B. CEBULSKI, SVP of Creative & Content Development; DAVID GABRIEL, SVP of Publishing Sales & Circulation; MICHAEL PASQUOLLO, SVP of Brand Planning & Communications; JIM KEEFE, VP of Operations & Logistics; DAN CAPH, Executive Director of Publishing Technology; JUSTIN F. GABRE, Director of Publishing & Editorial Operations; SUSAN DRISCOLL, Editorial Operations Manager; ALEX MORALES, Publishing Operations Manager; STAN LEE, Chairman Emeritus. For information regarding advertising in Marvel Comics or on Marvel.com, please contact John Deane, SVP of Integrated Sales & Marketing, at jdeane@marvel.com. For Marvel subscription inquiries, please call 800-217-9158. Manufactured between 06/10/2011 and 06/21/2011 by R.A. DONNELLEY, INC., GLASGOW, KY, USA.

PREVIOUSLY...

Roland Deschain, last of the line of Arthur Eld, continues his pursuit of the Man in Black across the endless Mohaine Desert. The gunslinger believes he may hold the key to Roland's all-consuming quest for the secret of the Dark Tower.

He travels through Pricetown and eventually reaches the decrepit town of Tull. Attempting to gain knowledge of the Man in Black's whereabouts, Roland sleeps with a female saloon keeper named Allie.

However, their relations are interrupted by the sudden entrance of the saloon's former owner, Sheb, brandishing a knife...

Here's the thing about Roland's life: it ain't filled with a lot of quiet moments and pillow talk.

His dalliance with Allie ain't no exception to that rule.



She was mine! Mine First! Mine!

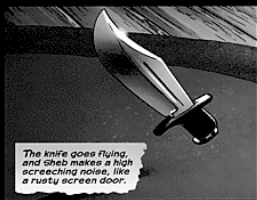
Nice gold tooth.



Maybe I'll knock it out.



The knife goes flying, and Sheb makes a high screeching noise, like a rusty screen door.



In the end, he's just a little man. Hardly a worthy opponent for the last gunslinger of Gilead.

His hands flutter in marionette movements, both wrists broken.

It was for you! It was only for you, Allie.

It was you first and it was all for you. I--

Ah, oh God, dear God...

Shhh. Shhh. Come on over to the table and let me see what I can do.

She sets his wrists with slats of kindling from the fire box. He weeps weakly and without volition.

Shhh, you ass. How will you make your living now?

Didn't you know you were never strong?

Hambry.

EH?

Hambry. On the Clean Sea.

Roland's voice is flat and empty and dangerous something terrible.



What about it?

I knew you looked familiar.



You were there, weren't you. Many and many-a, as they did say.



What if I was? I don't remember you.



But you remember the girl, don't you. The girl named Susan? And Reap night?

Were you there for the bonfire?

The little man's lips tremble, covered with spit. His eyes say he knows the truth of his situation...

...namely that he's a lot closer to dead than when he'd come bursting in with a knife in his hand.



But...you was just a **boy**! One of them three boys! You come to count stock, and Eldred Jonas was there, the Coffin Hunter, and--



Get
out of
here.



Get out of here
before I tie you
to a tree!

Set you on fire and sing
songs while throwing
corn shucks at
you!

Roland!
He's just
a--

I know
what he
just is!



You heard me, you maggot! You
worm! Get out before I give
you what you and your kind
rightly deserve and she
never did!

Get out
while you
still can!!!



With those busted wrists of his,
she's going to have some
problems changing the
trousers he just pissed
himself in.

My heart
goes out
to him.

Kinda doubt
that.

You care
to tell me
what that was
about?

How does Roland tell her?

Tell her of his being miles away, helplessly watching through a magic sphere the death of his one true love, Susan...

...her last words, a screamed "Roland, I love thee!" seared into his mind in the same agonized way the flames seared her skin.

How does he tell her that his soul died that day? That the only way he can make love to a woman is to conjure up recollections of Susan and pretend he's holding her, kissing her, finding solace in her?

Never mind.

Gheb and me, he...he did what he could, which wasn't much, and I took what I could because I had to.

There's nothing to be done. What else is there? Except...I'm glad that you are so strong.

Who was she? A girl you loved?

Leave it, Allie.

I can make you strong--

No. You can't do that.

What you can do is tell me about Nort and the man in black.

Nort...died. He was touched by God.

He was here ever since I can remember. Nort, I mean, not God.

"He had a honeywagon for a while."

"So he was a beekeeper?"

"A wha--? Oh, Meh. Lord no. A honeywagon is what we call a manure cart."



"But then he started to drink. Which I guess you can't *blame* him for."

"When you're hauling crap around all day, stinking to high heaven, you seek your escapes where you can."

"But eventually the escape was all that mattered. He sold his rig to Kennerly, who gave him much *less* than it was worth..."



"...but enough to buy liquor for a while. Except a while isn't forever."



"I'll never forget him begging me for a drink, so desperate he was willing to chug down the Camel Piss."

"The what now?"

"The slop leftover from the unfinished drinks at the end of the day. Folks urged me to give it to him so they could have a laugh. Me, I had no laughter left. Haven't for a while."



"Anyway, Nort *needed* to stay numb, 'cause at that point, if feelings started to return, he'd have crumbled and died."

"So he went out to the old devil grass and he started to smell it."

"Then he started *smoking* it."



"Then *chewing* it."



"The kids started to follow him around and sic their dogs on him. He wore old green pants that stank."



"At the last, he didn't eat anything. Just chewed grass. He might have been a king, in his mind."

"The children might have been his jesters and the dogs his princes."



"He died right in front of this place. Came clumping down the boardwalk--his boots wouldn't wear out, they were engineer boots he found in the old train yard."

"You could see all the lights of hell in his eyes, and smell the dirt and the rot and the weed."



"I think he meant to come in and listen to Sheb play the piano. And right in the doorway, he stopped and cocked his head."

"Allie!
Y'hear that?
Coach is coming!"

"Except there was no coach to hear. None due, none coming, none but in his own head. I tell him that."



"But now he *begs* me to come out, to see it with my own eyes."

"Nort,
there's nothing
out here!"

"How can you say that? It's right there, all black and--"



"Then he puked, and it was black and full of blood. The stink was enough to make you want to run mad."



"And that's when I realized. When we all realized, I think."



"Toldja I heard it...the coach is comin'... fer me..."



"Death's own coach, with the Reaper himself at the reins."



"Given how Tull is a little squaw of nothing town, a far piece from nowhere itself..."

"...you'd think that Death wouldn't even bother to make the trip himself."

"But he did."

"And the man
in black?"

"You have to *have* it, don't
you, Roland? You couldn't
just throw me a *toes* in the
bed and go to sleep."

"I have to
have it."

"All right, I'll
tell you."

"He came in the late afternoon
of the day Nort died, and the
wind was whooping it up, pulling
away the loose topsoil."

"The clouds flew across the sky
as if they had seen something
horrifying in the desert wastes
where they had so lately been."





"The regulars were drunk as lords. Sheb was playing Methodist hymns ragtime...

"...and the grizzled layabouts who'd attended Nort's wake had sung themselves hoarse.

"Voices screamed and hollered, never overcoming the wind but sometimes challenging it.



"I watched him as he walked toward me. He was dressed like a priest, but there was no religious symbol on him, although that meant nothing by itself.



"His voice was all soft and pleasant."

"Whiskey. I want the good stuff, honey."





No
need to be
sorry.

I don't
have change
for this.

Don't worry
about it.



So are you
only passing
through?

"He didn't reply for a
long time, and I was
about to repeat the
question when he said..."



Don't talk
trivialities.
You're here
with death.



Did...did you
lie about your
holiness? To
test me?

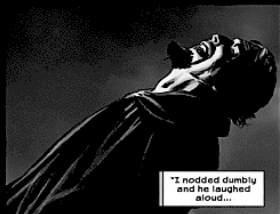


You cared
for him. Isn't
that true?

What, Nort?
That's...I think
you'd better...

You're soft-
hearted and a little
afraid, and he was on the
weed, looking out hell's back
door. And there he is, they've
even slammed the door now...

...and you
don't think
they'll open it until
it's time for you to
walk through, isn't it so?





"The man in black sprang forward and Aunt Mill drew away from him. He grinned fiercely and slapped her broad belly."

"That's better, isn't it?"



"Aunt Mill broke into sobs and fled blindly through the doors. The others watched her go silently."



"The wind howled and shrieked and thrummed. Thunder racketed the sky with a sound like some god coughing."

"A man near the piano with a forgotten beer in one hand made a groaning, slobbering sound."







Nothing
is forever!
Not even
death!

"He jackknifed over Nort in
a smooth arc. It was pretty,
like a flash of water."



"He caught himself on his
hands, sprang to his feet
in a twist, grinned..."





"...and then he went over again.

"One of the watchers of the insanity started to applaud."



Jeb, knock it the hell off.

What? I can't do them leaps.

Jump again, stranger!



"He complied, a third arc across the body.



"That's when Nort twitched."







"I felt numb, my feet
shoving me backwards.
I was in a blind panic.
And then..."



"So here's
your wonder!
I've given it
to you!"

"Now you can
sleep easy.
Even *that* isn't
irreversible."

"Although
it's...so...
goddamned...
funny!"

"And he began
to laugh again."

TO BE CONTINUED.

RAISING THE DEAD

In this issue of our tale we witness what I believe is the most chilling event of the Dark Tower saga, namely the resurrection of the weed-eater Nort. Not only is this the most openly supernatural/magical occurrence of the original books, but it is also the greatest demonstration of the Man in Black's far-reaching powers.

Those of you who have read *The Fall of Gilead* have already seen the Man in Black raise John Farson's nephew from the dead, so this most recent miracle (if miracle it can be called) will not come as such

a surprise. However, longtime fans of the original novels will realize that James Farson's resurrection was but an echo of the incredible resuscitation found in *The Gunslinger*, an occurrence beautifully illustrated in the comic book you now hold in your hands.

Although Nort's resurrection, recounted in chapter one of *The Gunslinger*, spans just over six pages, it is indelibly etched on my memory. As in our version of the tale, the Man in Black arrives in Tull during a terrible windstorm, almost as if he is blown in by the evil weather. Although he is dressed like a priest, there is nothing holy about him. His black, hooded robe obscures his features, but his horrid grin is testament enough to his cruel sense of humor.

When the Man in Black enters Sheb's honky-tonk, Nort's wake is already in full swing. The regulars are drunk as lords, and Sheb, the piano player, is playing Methodist hymns ragtime. Only Allie, the barkeep



and owner of the tonk, remains both sober and somber. To her, this orgiastic celebration is an abomination. In life, Nort was the butt of every joke, so she thinks it is obscene that the townsfolk are sending him off with such a hypocritical wake. Nort himself never mattered at all, and his death is just another excuse for a party.

Beyond the batwing doors the wind rages, and though the wake's attendees screech and holler to be heard over its gusts, they can never completely drown out its howling. Nort's body has been laid out on two tables in the center of the room. His mouth hangs open in a slack grin. Two slugs rest on his eyelids, keeping them closed, and his hands are folded upon his chest. His entwined fingers clasp a sprig of devil grass. He smells like poison.

Surveying the scene with his customary grin, the Man in Black asks for whiskey at the bar. As Allie serves him, he questions her about her feelings for the



departed. Able to read souls as easily as he can cast spells, the Man in Black knows that Allie cared for Nort, even though the rest of the town thought him a weed-addled wastrel. Angrily, Allie tells her unwelcome visitor that Nort didn't have anything in his life other than the weed, so who can blame him for his addiction? Then she asks the Man in Black to leave.

Rather than obey Allie's wishes, the Man in Black bursts out laughing. Everyone in the



room—drunk or not—stares at him. The Man in Black then tells the crowd that he will show them a wonder. Slapping an old woman called Aunt Mill on her broad belly (sending her sobbing out into the storm), he begins to spit onto Nort's face. Gobs of spittle roll down Nort's hawk-thin nose, onto his chin and creased neck. The piano player laughs hysterically—a nervous, crazed laugh—but almost immediately he begins to hack up gobs of phlegm. The Man in Black slaps him on the back.

Returning his attention to Nort, the Man in Black lunges

across the weed-eater's cold body. Catching himself on his hands, he springs onto his feet and then jackknifes over the corpse once more. Nort begins to twitch, and the Man in Black throws back his head and howls. The room is completely silent except for the rising pulse of the storm and the rasp of the Man in Black's breath as he continues his exertions.

Thanks to the Man in Black's witchery, Nort draws a deep dry breath. His hands begin to rattle aimlessly upon the table. The Man in Black leaps over him once, twice, thrice more. The body begins to vibrate, trembling



and twitching and pounding the tabletop like a lifeless doll animated by some monstrous clockwork. Rot and feces are excreted from Nort's body. Nort's eyes open . . . and the Man in Black laughs again.

This scene, so powerful and yet so demonic, feels like the antithesis of Jesus' raising of Lazarus. The man who does the raising in our tale is neither a saint nor a savior but a sorcerer and a blackguard. His pseudonyms are endless—Walter O'Dim, Marten Broadcloak, Randall Flagg, and Rudin Filaro are only a few of them. And his ultimate quest seems to be to stop our hero, Roland Deschain, from reaching the Dark Tower.

Perhaps the true power of this scene comes not from the drama of Nort's resurrection, which is profound, but from the questions it raises about the Man in Black's ultimate identity. As Constant Readers know, Walter claims to have been born human, but his powers seem to belie this. In the end, this was why—in the

one shot comic I created with Richard Isanove—I gave him a slightly different parentage. He became, as seemed fitting, the offspring of the ancient magician Maerlyn, and Selene, the goddess of the dark moon. (The last detail was added by Stephen King himself, and I have to say it was a stroke of brilliance.)

Ultimately, Walter's parentage (human or not) matters less than the powers he has accrued, and those powers are many. And as is always the case with Walter O'Dim, no deed is actually a good deed. We can rest assured that the resurrection of Nort spells trouble for Roland and for anyone who befriends him. What that trouble may be we do not yet know, though I can say for certain that we shall discover the Man in Black's treacherous plotting soon enough.

Until next month, long days and pleasant nights!

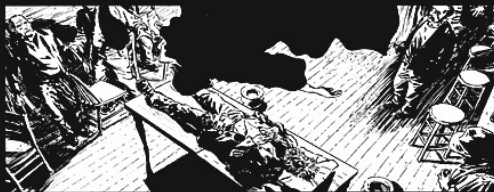
All the Best,
Robin Furth











COVER INKS FOR TULL #2 BY MICHAEL LARK



NEXT: "NOTHING IS FOREVER! NOT EVEN DEATH!"





All is not well in Mid-World. Gunslinger Roland Deschain has seen his father's Affiliation fall to the Good Man's forces. With his ka-tet murdered and Gilead in ruins, Roland has accepted his destiny to seek and save the Dark Tower, and set right this out-of-synch world. For now, Roland's search has him crossing the desert, pursuing the Man in Black, who holds the key to finding the Dark Tower. However, the Man in Black has left traps in his wake for the gunslinger, and upon entering the sleepy town of Tull, Roland fears he may have just stepped into one.

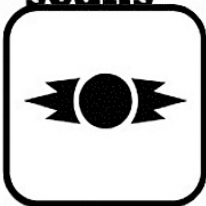
From the creative team that brought Roland's early adventures to life comes a new phase in the saga of the last gunslinger. This is a dark chronicle of revenge, lust, betrayal, and destiny—a cosmic quest that could only be conceived by master storyteller Stephen King.

PARENTAL ADVISORY
FOR STRONG LANGUAGE & CONTENT

PARENTAL ADVISORY
\$3.99 US
DIRECT EDITION
MARVEL.COM



scans



edits



